

VZCZCXRO4091

PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDH RUEHKUK RUEHROV
DE RUEHDM #0828 3351217

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P 011217Z DEC 09

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7073

INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0803

RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0759

RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RHMFISS/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 000828

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/ELA, NEA/RA, NEA/FO, EEB/EX;

DEPT PASS TO USTR

COMMERCE FOR BIS/SONDERMAN/CHRISTINO

NSC FOR SHAPIRO/MCDERMOTT

TREASURY FOR HAJJAR/CURTIN

PARIS FOR NOBLES

LONDON FOR LORD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ECON ETRD KBCT PREL SY IS

SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE BOYCOTT REPORTING - SYRIA

REF: STATE 120272

¶1. (SBU) In response to ref A concerning foreign government applications of the Arab League Boycott (ALB), Syria continues to be the strictest adherent of the primary and secondary boycotts. Although it allows goods to be imported with a positive, rather than negative, country of origin certificate, Syria strictly monitors and controls entry into its ports by ships that have made calls in Israel. Syria often requires certification of commercial activity in Israel by companies seeking to register trademarks or acquire import licenses. However, Syria has shown restraint and limited its enforcement of the tertiary boycott.

¶2. (SBU) In 2008, the SARG approved Directive No. 4964/1 exempting all new trademarks, patents, industrial drawings and design applications from the Israeli Boycott declaration. The directive was implemented on September 1, 2009.

¶3. (SBU) Syria maintains its own blacklist of firms for the boycott, separate from the outdated Arab League Boycott Office list.

¶4. (SBU) Damascus is host to the Arab League's Central Boycott Office (CBO). The CBO holds official regional meetings in Damascus twice per year. During its last meeting, Syria proposed that the boycott be fully reinstated by all Arab League members and that a study be conducted to determine how to enforce this policy.

¶5. (SBU) The SARG's boycott practices have not had a substantive impact on U.S. businesses because Syria has been subject to U.S. economic sanctions since May 2004.

¶6. (SBU) In addition to the CBO, Syria maintains an ALB office under the wing of the Ministry of Defense. Among the duties of this ALB office is to recommend to the Ministry of Economy and Trade the banning of certain companies from operating in Syria and deleting names of companies from the "Blacklist".

GOODFRIEND